

REMARKS

In regard to section 2 of the office action, the abstract was amended in the preliminary amendment filed with the application on 10/14/2004.

In regard to section 3 of the office action, the specification has been amended. No drawing change is needed.

In regard to section 3 of the office action, the examiner is directed to MPEP 608.01 which recites:

"Examiners should not object to the specification and/or claims in patent applications merely because applicants are using British English spellings (e.g., colour) rather than American English spellings. It is not necessary to replace the British English spellings with the equivalent American English spellings in the U.S. patent applications. Note that 37 CFR 1.52(b)(1)(ii) only requires the application to be in the English language. There is no additional requirement that the English must be American English."

The examiner is requested to withdraw his objection.

In regard to sections 5 and 6 of the office action, claim 2 has been amended above.

Claims 1, 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gogami et al. (US 5,975,420) in view of Hoppe et al. (US 5,637,858). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gogami et al. (US 5,975,420) in view of Hoppe et al. (US 5,637,858) and Atsumi

(US 5,736,781). The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify applicants' claimed invention. Claim 1 claims an electronic microcircuit module tape. Gogami shows (Fig. 9C) an individualized electronic module, but fails to disclose a tape adapted to accommodate an IC chip. Hoppe et al. describes (Fig 7a) a method to manufacture a semi-finished module comprising the following steps:

an IC chip is attached to a central area of contact surfaces of a metal band and connected to with the contact surfaces by bonding wire;

a continuous flexible band, provided with openings and with an adhesive layer on one side is laminated in such a way that the flexible band is glued to the metal band by means of the adhesive layer and at least the IC chip and the bonding wire lie within the openings;

a casting compound is poured into the openings so as the walls of said openings serve as a limiting frame for the casting compound to prevent it from flowing off.

Hoppe et al. does not disclose or suggest a tape adapted to receive an IC chip as claimed in amended claim 1. Thus, even if (for the ask of argument) it is obvious to combine the teachings of Gogami and Hoppe et al., this still would not render the features of claim 1 obvious. Gogami and Hoppe et al., alone or together, do not suggest the combination of features recited in claim 1. They do not disclose or suggest

a tape adapted to receive an IC chip as claimed in amended claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable and should be allowed.

In the prior art reel-to-reel processes (see US 5,637,858 and US 5,989,941), the IC chip is attached at an early stage. However, a fast procedure may induce high rejection rate; which rejection at this stage is very expensive since the attached IC chip cannot be re-used anymore. An object of the invention is to provide a solution to increase the yield of the manufacturing of an IC module while reducing its cost.

This objective is achieved by displacing the attachment of the IC chip at the most advanced step as possible in the process. Hence, it is suggested to implement a tape, including the elementary components of the IC module, which is adapted to receive an IC chip. The IC chip can be mounted on the tape at an advanced step of the process, and further electrically connected to the contact pads of the tape.

It is submitted that none of the prior art seeks to solve this objective problem, and does not suggest the implementation of a tape having all the features of amended claim 1. Amended claim 1, therefore, involves an inventive step over the art of record.

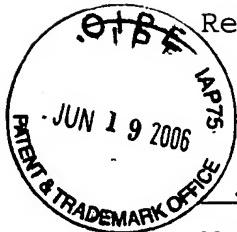
Though dependent claims 2-4 and 15 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 1. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

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Claim 15 has been added above to claim the features recited therein.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,


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6/14/06
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